

We deserve a more dignified death.
A death that grants time for mourning —
time to weep,
to pause by the grave —
I refuse to call it a hole —
to cry for the ones lost,
to scold them gently for leaving too soon,
to beg them to return,
even for a moment,
so we might rewrite a few pages of the story.

A death where we wrap the fallen in white gauze,
not in blue or black plastic bags.
Where the body remains whole,
not scattered into flesh and fragments.

A death where we carry our martyrs in solemn processions,
not on the backs of frightened, famished donkeys,
exhausted by the stench of burnt flesh and blood
at every dawn and dusk.

We long for a death
that allows us to hang our loved ones' portraits at the street corner,
to place wreaths at the heart of the mourning tent,
to sing national songs again—
we miss singing songs of sacrifice for the homeland.

We need a death
in which we honor the mother of the martyr
by cooking her a warm meal,
by offering her letters of solace
that ease the pain—if only a little—
by letting her feel the greatness of her gift.

There used to be a single mourning tent in our neighborhood.
We poured into it all our sorrow,
all our songs,
all the flowers we could gather.
Now death has multiplied.
The flowers have withered.
And we no longer have time to grieve.

Where has war hidden that kind of death?
And why has it given us instead
a death that is relentless,
quick,
stacked upon itself,
ordinary—
leaving us no space
to cry?

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